



FORE | WORD

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Today, as throughout our history, the men and women of the U.S. Navy are defending freedom and promoting democratic values in a very dangerous world. Devoted Sailors serve on the point, often under arduous conditions, committed to achieving the Navy's mission and upholding America's ideals. At home and overseas, our people are a resilient, capable, and motivated force for peace. They are proud to serve, and they are at the heart of everything that is good in our Navy.

Our Navy has worked hard to prepare for an uncertain future and has made great strides toward realizing our strategic vision, "Sea Power 21." Working as an aligned, integrated team, everyone—from our civilian and uniformed leaders in Washington to the newest Sailors at sea—is contributing to improved Fleet readiness, professional and personal development, and innovative operational concepts, all of which are shaping our future.

We will continue to build upon the foundations of "Sea Power 21"—Sea Strike, Sea Shield, and Sea Basing—while also investing in our Top Five priorities: manpower, current readiness, future readiness, quality of service, and alignment. Our progress on these fronts is visible everywhere... Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom... our improved surge capability through the Fleet Response Plan... launching of the Navy's first Expeditionary Strike Group... broad successes in sea-based ballistic missile defense... These efforts and myriad others ensure the Navy can deliver credible, persistent combat power—the sovereignty of the United States—to the far corners of the Earth, anytime, anywhere, without a permission slip.

As testament to this capability, our brave men and women remain steadfast in their mission to fight the Global War on Terrorism, a difficult conflict that pits our Sailors against ambiguous yet lethal threats and enemies. That said, our own asymmetric advantages—advanced technologies, the best weapons and sensors, leading-edge ships and aircraft, dedicated Sailors possessing the winning combination of intelligence, capability, and persistence—will carry the day. These combined strengths, seamlessly networked with our Joint partners and projected onto the battlefield, ensure the Navy-Marine Corps Team will retain its asymmetric advantages in fighting conflicts today and tomorrow.

The 2004 edition of Vision... Presence... Power—the eleventh edition of this annual program guide—provides an overview of our Sea Power 21 strategy, investments, and the critical programs and initiatives that will enable the Navy to carry out its missions successfully, around the world and around the clock. I invite you to take a closer look at what your Navy is doing today and how we are planning for America's future.